West Point
8 Octo. 1782.

Sir,

I frequently have had the intention to write to you respecting the operations of the great cause in which we are engaged, and I was impressed with a certainty that the objects discussed would be a sufficient apology for the trouble I might have given you. In the present instance the importance of the subject may not so fully involve it excuse, for I detail nothing with which the well being of the State is immediately connected. But I am conscious I address myself to a gentleman of humanity, that sweet principle, the result of light and knowledge, which to all liberal minds will be an ample consolation against the zeal and fury of misjudging men.

I shall take the liberty just to recite the case of a young Mr. Winslow, now in New York, son to the late Isaac Winslow Esqr: and to request the favor of your to know whether he may be permitted to return, and your interest for that purpose. This young gentleman

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was not eleven years of age at the commencement of hostilities, and is but just eighteen at present. He has been in Canada the greatest part of the war and never in any office or employment whatever. His father and mother are dead - and his brothers and sisters are in Boston. He has now arrived at strength of judgement sufficient to choose for himself, and principle and affection induce him to decide in favor of his native country. His character is fair and he promises to be a good member of any community in which he may reside.

I have been on two commissions this year to meet commissioners of the enemy, to endeavor to effect a general exchange of prisoners and other matters relating to them. At both of those meetings young Mr. Winslow obtained permission to see me, when he most earnestly solicited permission to return. In the first instance I wrote to the Governor, to which I have not had any answer. Suppose no formal permission could be obtained, what conduct would be observed if he came and cast himself on the mercy of the Government? I have written a similar letter to the Hon

Jr°

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John Pitts Esqr. to whom I beg you to mention this affair. I shall esteem myself under great obligations by receiving an answer directed to me at this place.

I did not intend to have mentioned any thing of a public nature in this letter, but I cannot refrain from hinting to you the extreme uneasiness of the Massachusetts Line. The total want of pay - scanty fare - and an apprehension arising from information that it was possible the resolves of Congress respecting a future provision might be nugatory, have by their combined force raised their unhappy sensations to an alarming height. Their future peace will depend much on the success of the committee now with you. Indeed their existence or non existence, as an army may be the consequence. Their patience is so much exhausted and their passions so high, that any circumstance, from either Congress or any other body, which may have a tendency to destroy those promises which have been almost their only food for years past, would open a scene which might renovate the expiring hopes of the enemy

and

and continue the war for years to come.

I write this in great confidence, and beg leave to subscribe myself with great respect,

Your most obed[ient] servant.

H Knox.

The Honorable

Secy.

Genl Knox

VIII

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